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DEATH OF CAPTAIN RICHARD S. FLOYD, LATE PRESIDENT OF THE LICK TRUSTEES.

Captain R. S. FLOYD, President of the Lick Trustees from 1876 to the present time, died suddenly in Philadelphia on the 17th of October, at the age of 47 years. He had been closely connected with the Lick Observatory, almost from the very beginning, and his name will always be honorably associated with its early history. The following paragraphs from the Introductory Note to the first Volume of the Publications of the Observatory (1887) exhibit clearly the nature of the work accomplished under his direction:

"The completion of the task entrusted to the Lick Trustees by the provisions of Mr. LICK'S Deed of Trust is now apparently near at hand. This task was to construct and erect 'a powerful telescope, superior to and more powerful than any telescope ever yet made, with all the machinery appertaining thereto, and appropriately connected therewith, * * * and also a suitable observatory.'

"The present Board of Trustees was appointed September 2, 1876, and has had this object in view continuously for the past ten years. In the course of this time members of the Board have visited many of the leading observatories of this country and of Europe; the principal astronomers of the world have been advised with personally and by correspondence; thousands of letters have been written to them, to architects, contractors, builders and instrument makers; and every detail of the construction and equipment of a vast astronomical establishment on the summit of a mountain four thousand feet in height and twenty-six miles distant from the nearest town, has been personally superintended.

"It is impossible to convey in a few words any adequate idea of the multiplicity of separate interests which have been considered—from those of the practical astronomer to those of the day-laborer; nor of the distressing legal complications which have arisen and which are now happily settled; but it will be found to be interesting by those who will read this and subsequent volumes of the Observatory Publications, to remember the very exceptional nature of the duties confided to us.

"We have been obliged to make the summit of Mount Hamilton accessible by a road twenty-six miles long, to remove more than 70,000 tons of material in order to get a level platform large enough for the instruments to stand upon, to arrange a good and sufficient water supply on the top of a barren mountain, to maintain and provide for workmen of all classes, and to carry out in the best and most economical manner the real object of our trust, which was to present to the world an astronomical observatory of the highest class, which should be permanently useful to science.

"The difficulties were not simply those of a practical nature. At the very beginning of our work it was a matter to be seriously considered whether the most powerful telescope ought to be made as a refractor or as a reflector. The providing of the rough glass discs has itself required six years, and has only been accomplished after twenty unsuccessful trials. The plans of the Observatory buildings had to be settled upon, so as to accomplish our objects in the most efficient and at the same time in the most economical manner.

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"The present volume is designed to be the first of a series of Publications of the Lick Observatory. In it will be given a brief description of the Observatory in its present state, and a short history of the work which has been done. * * * * *

"More detailed and more purely scientific investigations of the various instruments will be given in future volumes. This one may serve as a register of progress up to this time, and as an introduction to a series of astronomical works which are to result from the generous gift of JAMES LICK to his fellow-citizens of California."

Captain FLOYD was not only the President of the Trustees, but also was specially in charge of the construction of the Observatory, and to this task he brought his best abilities and most faithful service. No one knows better than the writer of these lines how much the institution is indebted to his unfailing interest, to his quick intelligence, and to his honest purpose.

His character was such that those brought near to him loved him. And no difference of opinion could shake this affection.

When the history of the Lick Observatory comes to be written, the name of FLOYD must hold a conspicuous and honorable place in its annals.

EDWARD S. HOLDEN.

1890, October 18.